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ABSTRACT

In 1972, an education delegation of administrators in higher education visited preschool through higher education schools in Russia and Bulgaria and participated in informal seminars with directors and faculty of various institutions. In this paper one member of that delegation who visited schools in Moscow, Leningrad, and Sophia, Bulgaria discusses educational practice, planning, and trends that he observed. The paper is divided into the following sections: (1) A Frame of Reference (which identifies significant prejudices and difficulties that one encounters in attempting to understand a foreign culture during a brief visit); (2) National Planning Viewed in Context of Education Goals; (3) Perceptions of Soviet National Planning Styles; and (4) Soviet and United States Mechanisms for Implementing Change. (Author/RM)

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TITLE: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS OF SOVIET NATIONAL PLANNING IN EDUCATION

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Preface

The following paper "Participant Observations of Soviet National Planning in Education" is based upon three weeks of visitation to Soviet and Soviet-related educational institutions in March 1972 as part of an education delegation of administrators in higher education (led by Dr. Gerald Read, Kent State University, and sponsored by the Comparative and International Education Society). The members of the education delegation were hosted in a broad spectrum of educational institutions---pre-school through higher education---and participated in informal seminars with the respective directors and staff of primary and secondary schools, as well as top administrative personnel and faculty of institutions of higher education. The itinerary for the three weeks included the following visitations:

	Visits
Leningrad:	(a) 10 year school
	(b) Specialized Music School
	(c) Teachers Cultural Center
	(d) House of Friendship (Leningrad State University)
Tallin, Estonia:	(a) Specialized Music School
	(b) University of Tartu
Moscow:	(a) House of Friendship
	(b) Moscow University
Plovdiv & Sophia, Bulgaria:	(a) 10 year school (rural)
	(b) 10 year school (urban)
	(c) Bulgarian Ministry of Education at Balkan Hotel

Since a variety of alternatives regarding types of educational institutions in each city were available to participants in the international seminar, the above visitation program reflects the choices that were made by this particular member. Other delegates selected specialized technical schools, vocational schools, or emphasized day care or pre-school programs. The criteria for selection of the above itinerary was based upon the anticipated probability of securing access to information related to national educational policy and planning--the specific focus of my interest in participation. Thus, whenever possible, a House of Friendship or Cultural Center was selected (in lieu of a day care school or technical school) in order to engage in a dialogue on planning with national ministry of educational personnel who served as panelists in these locations.

The purpose of this paper will be to attempt to synthesize the information that was obtained on the educational tour in terms of some conceptual understandings about the nature, implications and trends of national educational planning as viewed through selected locations within two different republics of the Soviet Union. The proposed outline for the paper is indicated below:

I. A Frame of Reference

The intent of this section will be to identify significant prejudices and difficulties that one encounters in attempting to isolate concepts and understandings about a foreign culture as a result of brief visits. Heavy emphasis will be placed upon the work of Drs. Fritz and Helen Redl who

made a similar trip (under the auspices of the Ford Foundation) to the Soviet Union in 1960. They have identified a number of significant variables; i. e., deviation formation, educational margin, "sputnik neurosis," etc. that influence a visitor (albeit a professional visitor) to a foreign land.

II. National Planning Viewed in Context of Education Goals

In this chapter, an effort will be made to utilize the work of Soviet Educators on Soviet Education, translated and edited by Helen Redl, as a basis for understanding the educational product the Soviet system seeks to achieve. Soviet educational goals will be discussed in order to provide a context within which planning and policy making can be understood and interpreted.

III. Perceptions of Soviet National Planning Styles

The purpose of this section will be to consider some of the salient features of national planning that were perceived or directly recorded in conferences with ministers of education in the various locations. New trends in Soviet education will also be discussed.

IV. Soviet and United States Mechanisms for Implementing Change

Here an attempt will be made to contrast United States Federal and Soviet mechanisms for implementing educational changes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. FRAME OF REFERENCE 1

II. NATIONAL PLANNING VIEWED IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL GOALS 10

III. PERCEPTIONS OF SOVIET NATIONAL PLANNING STYLES. 16

IV. SOVIET AND U. S. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE 24

FOOTNOTES 27

I. Frame of Reference

The purpose of my journey to the Soviet and Soviet related educational institutions in March 1972(as part of an education delegation of administrators in higher education, sponsored by the Comparative and International Education Society) was to assess educational planning in the Soviet and its effect upon such variables as school climate, administrative style, student attitudes towards learning, classroom behavior, etc. The objective was formidable indeed, in view of the limitations imposed by the brief duration of visits to educational institutions in the various locations throughout the two different republics of the Soviet Union.

While considerable restraint was attempted in an effort to avoid premature judgments based upon compressed time observations, it was inevitable that my perceptions would be vulnerable to generalized impressions of personnel encountered, activities observed and prepared remarks of Intourist Guides. Ultimately a number of distinct notions were formulated regarding the relation between national planning and the Soviet educational product. (These notions are discussed in Section II.)

The understandings that ultimately resulted from the school visitations should perhaps be viewed in light of some of the variables that were identified by Drs. Helen and Fritz Redl as they sought to untangle prejudices and preconceived notions that influenced their judgments about the Soviet Union on a similar trip in 1960.[1] These variables, in my judgment,offer a

valuable context within which to view the understandings that were derived by this participant observer during the course of the brief voyage to the Soviet Union. A number of them have been extracted from the Redl's report to the Ford Foundation and are discussed below:

Educational Margin

As delegates in the exchange program, we were consistently informed by teachers and administrative personnel that "all parents expect their children to perform well in school;" "all parents have motivated children whom they anticipate will meet national standards of performance;" "all parents are literate and work cooperatively with the schools in assuring optimum classroom performance by their respective youngsters." Since educators typically organize learning environments around commonly identified principles of child growth and development and their concurrent aspects of maturation, such statements regarding parental expectations appeared to be either naive or evasive. The Redls, however, caution that the significant question is not so much what administrators indicate the parents expect, but rather the degree of flexibility--or the educational margin--that prevails regarding their expectations.

The Redls' identification of educational margin called to mind a similar U.S.A. experience encountered in a research study that provided the baseline data for an educational program development component in the Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime Proposal in Syracuse, New York in 1963. At that time, I served as an Education Planning Associate for the Mayor's Commission for Youth" with responsibility for linking research

outcomes to program development. The research data that was obtained from the minority parent population in a low income target area under study revealed that the majority of minority parents wanted their children to be doctors, lawyers, and related professional personnel. When asked, however, what they realistically thought their children's occupational choices would be, they responded with truck driver, mechanic, and other blue collar occupations.[2]

Thus, the question of degree of educational margin is significant in terms of interpreting th. signals that were emitted by the Soviet representatives. What parents say about their children and what behavioral patterns they are actually willing to tolerate may be quite different.

Caste and Class

Time and again, I was impressed with the uniformity of dress that was observed on the streets, in the subways, in hotel lobbies, and in classroom situations. It was not possible for me to isolate the individuals that could be identified as upper, middle, or lower class. This was particularly the case in Leningrad and Moscow. The populations observed appeared functionally garbed with appropriate leather boots for the cold climate, warm coats, and fur collars for both men and women, fur or woolen hats, securely fastened to adequately protect them against fierce winter winds, and invariably woolen or leather gloves. To a visiting observer there appeared to be no important difference in dress style or quality that would suggest a caste or class differentiation. Even the elitist hotels, where obviously food and drink was expensive. the formal dress consisted of very modest skirts and

blouses for the women and very plain, unfashionably tailored suits for the men. In addition, almost all individuals observed appeared to lack any form of exaggerated disease commonly found in Spain, Morocco, or other underdeveloped countries. The general state of individual health appeared excellent, although Dr. Zoya Zurubina, Professor at the University of Leningrad, informed us that curvature of the spine and poor eyesight among school children presented a major medical problem. A conclusion one might be tempted to draw would be that the several five-year plans of the Soviet Union have indeed achived a goal of equality of the masses and the elimination of caste and class.

Once again, the Redls caution that what may appear on the surface to be similarity of dress, even among those in top-rated hotels, may in fact be evidence of a class system in operation. Upon closer examination, they point out, there may be some special distinction in deliberately selecting a dress code that reinforces prior revolutionary involvement and that other cues for class and caste may exist. General bearing and demeanor of the individual, degree of authority, and respect commanded by those in service in the hotels, medals attached to the individual's suit of clothing, etc. may be more valid measures for ascertaining class or caste status than the more obvious indications of fashion and dress.

Spirit of Deviation

Patterns observed in the ten-year schools* related to classroom management, pupil-teacher relationship and school building climate appeared

*The ten-year schools incorporate both elementary and secondary grades K-8.

relatively uniform throughout the trip. Children sat at immovable desks and chairs. their classroom supplies were located in precisely the same relative locations on the desks, the boys all wore shirts, ties, and suites; and the girls wore black and white lace trimmed uniforms. Students all rose as the delegates entered the classroom and were seated in unison upon teacher command. The teacher dominated the classroom scene and utilized a single curriculum with all students in the classroom. No group activity, individualized activity, or individual freedom to move about the room and communicate with fellow classmates, was visible. Each ten-year School Director corroborated the remarks of the previous Director; namely, that all children received the same instruction with the same textbooks, and covered the same material at exactly the same hour throughout the respective republics of the Soviet Union. It must be noted, however, that this observer did detect some differences in general demeanor and flexibility of school directors, teachers, pupils, etc. within the given structure. In particular, very decided departures in this regard were noted in the Soviet-related schools in Bulgaria. Nevertheless, the implication drawn was that Soviet national planning promotes a rigid, demanding, unrelenting system of education for its young. The Redls, however, stress the need for observation of "deviation tolerance." In retrospect, it must be stated that while classroom behavior appeared unduly restrictive, the shouts, whoopees, and general release of energy that followed classroom dismissal were smiled upon benignly. Also, it is difficult to ascertain how much of the apparent conformity was "for visitors only" and how much actual deviation from expected classroom behavior the

teachers and directors normally tolerated on a daily basis.

Destiny From Above

As the trip progressed, I could discern very little of what might be termed "acting out" on the part of the youth in the classroom situations. Conformity to rules and regulations appeared pervasive. Children rose and were seated on cue, classrooms were silent, and deferential attitudes toward student teachers and regular classroom teachers was in evidence. I did not observe an unanticipated whisper, poke, or giggle in the classroom setting. All hands remained clasped and located on the center of the desk with feet firmly planted in uniform rows. Children appeared to defer to adults in general and stood respectfully at their desks for each recitation. The implications of what was observed might suggest an adult dominated society in which the teacher functions as an authority model. In contrast to our own educational system in which individuals are theoretically encouraged to relate to the teacher, to develop along individualized patterns of growth and development, to feel freedom to be oneself within the group setting, to actualize one's own destiny--this pattern appeared generally oppressive.

Here too, however, a note of caution was observed by the Redls who stress the historical European relationship of student to teacher--a relationship essentially of master and learner. Clearly, they point out that the historical press from previous generations promotes certain societal forms of adaptation that persist and may be only marginally related to the effect of national planning upon student behavior.

This point of view must be acknowledged and dealt with in arriving at

any conceptual framework within which to view the behavior of the classroom student. If one considers our own heritage in this country with its historical emphasis upon the spirit of pioneering individualism that helped to settle this country, the desirability of personal freedom, the need for individual entrepreneurship, etc., one recognizes the base of a value system (perhaps outmoded at this stage in our technological growth) that generates typical forms of adaptive behavior among the youth of our country both in and out of the classroom. Thus, a need exists to evaluate the conceptions of student behavior in light of cultural and historical inheritances from the past.

Etiquette of Sequence

Certain questions asked by the members of the education delegation tended to produce negative reactions from the Soviets that were discernible in terms of their physiognamy, clipped responses, evasive answers, or refusal to deal with the question at all. Questions related in particular to areas of juvenile delinquency, the non-performing or maladjusted child, the underprivileged or culturally deprived youngster, or conditions of psychological stress and deviance among the youth--all tended to trigger what one sensed to be hostile responses. The lack of what seemed to be adequate responses to these relatively straightforward questions was a cause of much consternation among the delegates as well as demonstrably displeased Soviet representatives. Seminar participants tended to interpret these sensitive areas in a variety of ways. Some argued that the Soviets were unwilling to "level" with us about problems and wished only to reveal the positive aspects of Soviet life. Others felt that we were asking for answers to questions we

would be reluctant to respond to if the roles were reversed, and that we, too, would stress only the positive. Yet, others preceived these shielded responses as evidence of a profound undercurrent of turbulence among the Soviet youth. All these attitudes were present among the United States delegates in reaction to answers received. Indeed, my own feeling was that questions which probed into delicate areas of national concern for which no standard party line response had been developed were evaded.

The Redls had a slightly divergent viewpoint. They believed (a) that subtle language communication differences unknown to the visitor might account for the evasive or noncommittal response, and (b) that the relatively undeveloped state of knowledge in clinical psychology might account for a lack of understanding to questions raised involving the use of psychological terms. It must be noted that the directors and teachers in the Soviet typically used such terms as "lazy," "no will to work," or "not smart enough," as opposed to psychologically oriented terms that teachers might normally tend to utilize in the United States. Once again, therefore, evaluation is required in light of accurate understandings of language innuendos and their implications.

A clear illustration of the problem of language cues is evident in our own minority ghettos in the U.S.A. Middle class teachers are often distressed by the language usage patterns of minority groups that incorporate forbidden cues in a middle income class structure. Often the singular problem of language usage tends to generate barriers to understanding and meaningful relations between student and teacher. Frank Reisman, in The Culturally Deprived Child, attempts to isolate some of these racial and

class language blocks and to encourage an appreciation and understanding of the creativity, looseness, variability, and playfulness of lower class language patterns as differentiated from the major middle class populations who train these children. Without belaboring the point, the need for adequate interpretation of language cues can be an important consideration in viewing the ultimate concepts that grew out of the three-week experience abroad.

Perhaps, a note needs to be sounded here in relation to the entire question of educational evaluation. So often educational programs that are supported by federal funds experience a rapid fall and decline because professional evaluators are unable to detect achievement of objectives defined along preconceived notions of anticipated behavioral change. Cost-benefit analysis schemes, PPBS budgeting programs, Pert charts, and other time schedule devices often serve as measures of performance and progress toward attainment of identified objectives. The more subtle and less detectable avenues of evaluation are frequently disregarded in favor of measures to which one can apply a "hands-on" approach. The frustration that was profoundly experienced by this observer in arriving at legitimate assessments of important educational concepts makes understandable the drive for concrete standards of judgment. Yet it clearly has induced an extreme reluctance toward snap judgments based on available data without much probing into the less definable and more subtle operating influences at work in the educational setting.

II. National Planning Viewed in the Context of Educational Goals

Centralized educational planning in the Soviet is a deliberate sustained effort to achieve explicitly defined educational goals. These goals mold the character of the educational plan that is implemented uniformly throughout the Soviet Union. George Z. F. Bereday makes the observation that--"Of all past and present philosophies of education, the Soviet is most uniquely the product of 'pure reason'."[3] It is build on the premise that a carefully designed and executed blueprint for learning can in fact produce desired educational printouts. Clearly then, any assessment of national planning must be coupled with an examination of the desired end objectives.

Two of these end objectives, or educational goals, focused sharply into view as the trip progressed and appeared markedly different from those that would tend to secure high priority among educators in our own educational system. One could speculate about a number of other goals such as moral education, citizenship, national service, etc., referred to in the educational literature on the Soviet; but these were not goals that one could easily observe or sense as a visitor in the educational settings.

Perhaps the foremost goal observed was that of student self-discipline in the Soviet Union. I was repeatedly struck by the conforming character of the student body. The obvious similarities in student dress served merely as an index to other types of conformity that extended into such areas as general physical demeanor, student teacher attitudes, student responses to teacher directions, etc. The classroom communicated the sense of a "collective" rather than a collection of individuals in a group setting. The

impact of Makarenko's education philosophy--reported in V. A. Krutetsky and N. S. Lukin's article on "Self Discipline in Adolescents"--was clearly visible in the classroom situation. Makarenko believed that in order to achieve self-discipline it was necessary to imprint the following attitudes in children:

1. The collective needs discipline in order to achieve its goals faster and better;
2. The individual must discipline himself to fulfill difficult tasks;
3. Each individual must subordinate his personal interests to the general discipline of the collective;
4. Discipline places the individual in a freer, better defined position, assuring his rights and privileges.[4]

Krutetsky and Lukin define it similarly as: "The habit of controlling one's behavior, of subordinating it to the rules and regulations of the collective and of the society, and of performing in accordance with social responsibilities."[5] The two qualities, restraint and subordination, appeared strikingly in evidence in the various locations visited.

Another goal that was apparent was that of individual academic attainment. Teachers in each school location stressed the importance of individual student achievement of nationally defined educational standards of excellence. The gifted student, we were informed, received special attention; and teachers and administrators were encouraged to nurture academic talent that was exposed in the classroom. While the emphasis on the gifted was

often repeated, there were no stated comparable efforts for the less able learner. Teachers sought correct responses to state prepared lesson plans and evaluated students on their ability to provide appropriate textbook solutions to problems. Several experiences tended to reinforce the keen impression of Soviet emphasis on excellence. In Children's Music School Number 2 in Leningrad--a specialized music school in Leningrad--the Director, Mrs. Maria V. Ershova introduced the delegates to several first to fourth grade students who performed for us. The performances were outstanding and subsequently delegates inquired about formal admittance procedures utilized to admit children from the local school district. The Director revealed that musical instruction and instruments were provided without cost to those who attended the school; however, musical aptitude had to be demonstrated prior to admittance. Upon further inquiry, it was determined that 20% to 40% of those youngsters who attended the school achieved professional stature and sought professional careers in music.

Similarly in experimental English Language School Number 20, in Moscow, Dr. Zoya Zarubina, Professor of Foreign Languages at Moscow University, indicated that demonstrated student language capability was required before admittance to a specialized language school was possible. Thus, as early as first grade the screening process based upon nationally defined norms is in evidence. Individual interest or desire to learn are subservient to the national needs of the state. This point is clearly made in Education in the USSR, an HEW publication. "Soviet policy precisely enunciates the function of education in the USSR: to serve the needs of the

State... To its full development every person is expected to contribute his best efforts as a primary obligation. The growth and development of his own individuality are of secondary importance."[6] In summary, my distinct impression was that individual academic talent was recruited, nourished, and sustained by the state to serve the needs of the state, and that individual attainment of academic excellence was a prized national goal.

It may be of interest to note that while the above aims seemed to predominate in my brief exposure to the Soviet System, the following are the stated Soviet School aims expressed by Madame L. Dubrovina, former Deputy Minister of Education of the R.S.F.S.R.

> "to equip pupils with knowledge of the fundamentals of the science of nature, society and human thinking and to develop in them a scientific outlook;
>
> to acquaint the younger generation with the general outlines of modern industry, the fundamentals of modern technique, and to teach them to link the conclusions of science with the practice of socialist construction;
>
> to ensure development in pupils of firm moral convictions; to implant in them boundless loyalty to their native land, respect and love for other nations, humanism, diligence, honesty and truthfulness;

to ensure coordination of the pupil's mental development with correct physical development; to bring up a generation of healthy vigorous people;

to provide for aesthetic education of pupils; to teach them to understand and appreciate art, develop aesthetic taste and cultivate creative ability."[7]

The educational methodology for achieving the specified educational goals that I observed appeared particularly noteworthy. As stated earlier, a single curriculum was employed uniformly throughout the schools. All children in each grade of the Ten-Year School were subject to the same lesson everywhere at the same time in a given republic. In Education in the Soviet Union, Elizabeth Moos makes the point, "Soviet educators believe that any child who is normal; i.e., not suffering from a definite physiological handicap, given the right environment and teaching can complete the work required in the eight-year course."[8] In addition, the classroom was teacher dominant. The teacher lectured, questioned, and administered appropriate reward or censure based on student response. It's interesting to read Krutetsky's admonition to teachers in disciplining teenagers in the classroom. He states: "...teachers, who have a thorough understanding of teenagers, know that a brief reprimand such as 'shame on you' or 'wise guy' can be more successful than a flood of words."[9] The teacher is viewed as the orchestrator of the learning environment and the dispenser of wisdom, knowledge, and approbation. Unlike our own educational system in which the

principle of student involvement and participation in setting and organizing the learning environment is viewed as worthwhile, the Soviet system appeared to emphasize the principle of teacher control and domination. The long discarded educational notion of the child as an empty vessel to be filled with superior knowledge seemed to be operative within the Soviet Education system. The book, Soviet Educators on Soviet Education is a particularly useful book in understanding Soviet pedagogy. Throughout their discussions of such topics as discipline, environment and heredity, sex education, reward and punishment, I was continuously impressed with the warm expression of feeling for children, the concerns of educators for reinforcing positive behavior, and the desire to encourage child growth and development by cultivating individual differences, etc. However, these educational concepts, when dealt with in the context of indoctrination and the economic needs of the state, experience a notable shift in implementation. Once the individual is subordinate to the group as a primary and fundamental operating educational principle, then it appears to me that a ripple effect sets in that transfixes the teaching-learning environment into one that inevitably promotes rigid conformity to authoritarian rules and regulations.

III. Perceptions of Soviet National Planning Styles

Perhaps the most lucid explanation of Soviet planning style was delivered by B[illegible]rian educators in Sophia, Bulgaria. While Bulgaria is not a Soviet Republic, it is a satellite country that takes much of its direction from the Soviet Union and is reflective of the Soviet educational system.[10] A panel consisting of Mr. Kacho Uladenov, Head of the Department of Methods in the Sophia Ministry of Education; Professor Christo Dimitrov, Dean of the Faculty of Chemistry, Sophia State University; Professor G. D. Piryov Aksakov, and Professor Najden Tschakarow of Sophia University, Bulgaria were convened for a seminar with participating delegates. On this occasion, I inquired if the panel could clarify the process used to identify the need for change in Bulgarian educational policy, the methods used to implement educational policy, and the techniques used to implement educational changes once the needs were identified. Mr. Uladenov responded:

> "Necessities serve as the basis for educational change. At the present time, we are experiencing a technological revolution that must be introduced into the schools. Changes are happening quickly. At present, we are making basic reforms in our educational system and in our methods and structure to deal with these changes. This year, for example, the Ministry passed a law introducing ten-year compulsory education; we have introduced new subjects; we also hope to make the student a more active part of education. The Ministry

of Education organizes all changes and must agree with all changes. We publish changes in the newspaper and over the radio. After it is accepted by the people, we implement the changes."

Professor Tschakarow introduced the following elaboration on planning style:

"As Mr. Uladenov stated, we are experiencing an industrial and scientific revolution. In order to meet technical needs, we must make changes in education. For example, the Ministry decided to study how kindergarten children could be trained to start thinking technically. Experimental work was introduced into the kindergarten to encourage technology. The program is now being implemented in many schools. We were trying to find out how far we could go in contributing to vocational guidance in the kindergarten years in order to give them proper educational guidance. We found the program very successful."

After the meeting adjourned, I chatted with Mr. Uladenov concerning more specific information on implementation of change and methods for dealing with resistance to change. He provided the following explanation:

"Once we determine that a program is successful, we encourage a number of schools to receive the experimental program. The Department of Kindergarten Education in the Ministry of Education and the Chairman of Pedagogics in Institutes work together to develop In-Service Training of

> Teachers. Inspectors in every kindergarten district are sent to the schools to see how the teachers are performing. The kindergarten teachers also form their own organizations to share experiences and also visit each other's schools. We also organize seminar work."

He added that the educational ministry consisted of a general staff for administering education from pre-school to the university, and that they were responsible for policy as well as educational process. He stated, "They are responsible for all education; set all qualifications for teachers, and all institutes to train teachers."

The social engineering approach to education and change is clearly evident in the above remarks. The planned, top-down structure is exercised in the Soviet and related countries based upon an élitist population of decision makers. Policy formulation transpires among the few for a mass population to meet identified national needs. The Ministry of Education has a formidable role in implementing policy that is derived from the Central Party of the Soviet Union.

Some New Trends in National Policy:

> We were fortunate in arriving in Leningrad at the time of the new ministry proclamation about the next five-year educational plan for the Soviet Union. There was much excitement and speculation about its implications among those educators whom we met. Some of the emerging trends that were being projected were

discussed in the Leningrad House of Friendship where representatives of the Leningrad City Council and the Leningrad University were gathered for a seminar meeting with the members of our delegation. The most significant proclamation was the new plan to require ten-year compulsory education as opposed to the current eight-year program of required school attendance. Members of the panel indicated that there would be an emphsis on more active involvement of the learner in implementing knowledge acquired in school, and that increased stress would be placed upon creativity in learning as opposed to rote memorization. Professor Vera Loginova, Dean of the Pedagogical Department, Herzen Teachers Training College, was particularly delighted with the new edict requiring two years of additional training for kindergarten teachers. She believed this to be a most important decision since nine and one-half million children attend kindergarten in the Soviet Union. She pointed out that kindergarten teachers typically have only vocational secondary education training. New requirements would provide for two additional years of training following their completion of secondary school. The projected five-year plan also called for a twenty percent salary increase for all teachers in the Soviet Union.

The most succinct discussion of anticipated trends in Soviet education took place at the House of Friendship in Moscow where

Dr. Zoya Zrubina, Professor of Foreign Languages delivered prepared remarks followed by a question and answer period. She had just come from a meeting with the Minister of Education in Moscow and was delivering news "hot off the press." Dr. Zrubina believed one of the most important features of the new five-year plan to be the movement away from the specialist to the "cultivated man" concept.[11] In the past, she explained the emphasis was on the physicist, the engineer, the technologist--without regard for his ability to master any other aspect of knowledge or learning. The new five-year plan would require demonstrated ability in speech, humanities, language, etc. in order to create a truly educated multi-dimensional individual.

Another significant movement was the anticipated use of entrance examinations for the vacancies in higher education. They were going to experiment with standardized tests as a basis for screening and selection since the demand for higher education was greater than available spaces. (One of the delegates in our group suggested to her that the Soviet was proposing to initiate a system that we were urging be discarded in our country because of its attendant problems.) At the present time, Soviet educators do not employ I.Q. tests or other standardized measures of achievement that we use in the United States of America.

Of course, the compulsory ten-year education plan was discussed commencing at age seven. However, some experimental programs

of early entrance (age six) were being attempted in eighteen schools in Moscow. Parents were being involved as part of the demonstration programs. It was being initiated because, according to Dr. Zarubina, seventy percent of all children who enter school (even those who do not attend kindergarten) are already able to read and ninety-five percent had simple computational skills.

Guaranteed employment following completion of secondary school and the twenty percent increase in teachers' salaries was also discussed.

The problems connected with higher education were forthrightly handled during the question and answer period. She was most explicit about the cultivation of the gifted by both parents and teachers in spite of all Soviet efforts to maximize learning among all populations. She said the brighter children are inevitably recommended for Pioneer Schools where opportunities for sports, travel, and enrichment in education were provided. Interested parents saw to it that tutors were secured for their children in academically weak areas. She felt disparities among children would increase with the movement toward the cultivated man since children would have to exhibit proficiency in a wide range of subject areas, and some would fall by the wayside without tutorial assistance.

At a more personal level, we heard from Mrs. Karakeneva, Director of School Number 93, an urban school in Sophia, Bulgaria.

Mrs. Karakeneva addressed a small group of us--approximately twenty--who chose to visit this particular school in Bulgaria. She combined her discussion of new trends with some allusion to planning style. She was informal and most revealing in her remarks. She stated:

> "We have absolutely one program and one central system of education. It is one and the same with all the rest of the schools in Bulgaria. We use the same texts and the same curricula. We operate an eight-year school from First to Eighth Grade, but I believe in the new plan calling for prolonged education. Under the new plan, we will give a push to their intellectuality, and Ninth and Tenth Grade classes will be specialized. Our program is prepared word by word by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health."

When queried about the student evaluation procedures, she responded,

> "We have no I.Q. system for evaluation. If there is anything wrong with a child, it will become clear. If there are gifted children, teachers must push those children. In such cases, we try to give harder problems to a child. There are also extra-curricular clubs for these children. At this moment, the gifted child stays with his group. In the future, it may be okay to move the child up a grade."

When asked about parent involvement in education planning, she replied:

> "Parents can help with labor, repair, etc. in the schools. They do their best in giving the child help. A classroom consists of thirty-five to forty students. Parents are asked to a meeting and elect a committee of parents. This is not a formal organization."

In summary, the new trends incorporate prolonged compulsory education, increased teacher salaries, a shift toward the cultivated man, a movement toward standardized testing, and increased teacher training requirements for kindergarten teachers. These changes coupled with the Soviet decision to increase consumer goods spending by twenty-five percent should mark some significant new directions for the Soviet citizenry. They appear to be moving out of the period resembling our own industrial revolution to a more liberated period of learning and living.

IV. Soviet and U. S. Mechanisms for Implementing Educational Change

Conclusion

Soviet mechanisms for implementing educational change are in sharp contrast to those of the United States. It is a highly centralized system in which decisions are formulated by an élitist population at the top and are implemented uniformly by dictum throughout the fifteen union republics. The more than one hundred nationalities contained within this federation of fifteen republics are the recipients of national policy over which they exercise little or no control. Directives designed to meet national needs and priorities are enunciated by the Ministry of Education, and are transmitted in a downward flow of authority. The directives are coupled with a system of inspection at subordinate levels of organization to insure compliance. Herbert C. Rudman makes this point very clear when he defines the characteristics of planning under the principle of Lenin's Democratic Centralism as:

1. Strict subordination of the minority to the majority.
2. The desisions of higher bodies are obligatory for lower bodies.
3. Periodic reports of subordinate bodies to higher bodies is required.(12)

He concludes by indicating that an elaborate system of inspection has been organized to insure conformity with the concepts that are developed for implementation. The characteristics of diversity, pluralism, and local differentiation--the essence of education and change in the U. S. are virtually absent in the Soviet Union. Instead, the elements of rational

planning, systematic organization, and implementation, and conformity to explicit national goals undergird the structure. These fundamental differences, when translated into practice, evolve totally different patterns of educational change.

The Sputnik Crisis in the U. S. serves as a useful illustration of this difference. The U. S. Congress responded to the national outcry for improved science education and science educators with the National Defense Education Act. However, the implementation of that legislation retained the national character of our planning and implementation process:

1. It was voluntary. Local communities had the option to participate or to reject federal funds to improve science education.
2. It was varied. Each local non-profit organization developed programs tailored to community needs.
3. It was locally determined. The federal government provided the legislation to meet a national need; however, each community determined its own local priorities to meet the intent of the legislation.

Within the broad purposes of the legislation, there was considerable latitude for community sponsored and administered change efforts. In addition, the aspect of central quality control was lacking. Responsibility for meeting identified objectives rested with the local governmental agencies. Charles E. Lindbloom refers to this type of planning as the science of "muddling through." Amitai Etzioni further comments, "Rationalistic models tend to posit a high degree of control over the decision making

situation on the part of the decision maker. The incrementalist approach presents an alternative model, referred to as the art of 'muddling through'." [13] In contrasting the rationalistic approach to change with other approaches (including the art of "muddling through"), Charles E. Lindbloom makes the observation that the hallmarks of rationalistic approach--clarity of objective, explicitness of evaluation, a high degree of comprehensiveness of overview, etc., are appropriate for relatively small-scale problem solving where the total number of variables are limited. [14]

Thus, while the United States system may suffer from a spasmodic short-term approach to problem solving, the Soviet System experiences the consequences of long-range planning and implementation that is superimposed without due regard for the wide disparities in language and nationality that exist in the Soviet Union.

Footnotes

[1] Helen and Fritz Redl, Unpublished Report to the Ford Foundation, (1960).

[2] Syracuse Mayor's Commission for Youth, Syracuse Action For Youth, Inc., Unpublished Report, (Syracuse, New York, 1963).

[3] George Z. F. Bereday, Ed., The Changing Soviet School, (Boston: Houghton Biflin Company, 1960), p. 4.

[4] Helen Redl, Ed., Soviet Educators on Soviet Education, (New York: The Free Press, 1964), p. 25.

[5] Ibid, p. 26.

[6] U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Education in the USSR, (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1959), p. 14.

[7] Bereday, op. cit., p. 99.

[8] Elizabeth Moss, Education In the Soviet Union,(New York: National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, 1963), p. 111.

[9] Redl, op. cit., p. 51.

[10] Members of our delegation were informed that several members of the Bulgarian education ministry were in Moscow participating in a Soviet educational planning session.

Footnotes

[11]This plan represented a slight divergence from the Bulgarian emphasis on the technological man and may be evidence of locally determined priorities.

[12]H. C. Rudman, The School and Its Fate in the USSR, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1967), p. 32.

[13]A. Etzioni, "Mixed Scanning: A 'Third' Approach to Decision Making," Public Administration Review, (December, 1967), p. 385.

[14]Charles E. Lindbloom, "The Science of Muddling Through," Public Administration Review, 1966, p. 79.